

# UTE MOUNTAIN TRIBE

**TOWAOC, COLORADO**  
2001-2002 Grant Amount: **\$2 Million**

## UTE Mountain Tribe

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### Mission and Vision

The mission of the Youth Opportunity Program is to ensure that each and every youth between the ages of 14 - 21 on the Ute Mountain Reservation is empowered to make meaning of their cross-cultural realities through the nurturing and support of both family and community. The vision of the YOP is to empower youth and their families to acquire the necessary life skills to achieve their own goals.

### Program Overview

The Ute Mountain UteTribe, YOP program operates a program in which qualified and caring counselors will be involved in the lives of every youth on the reservation. The YO program will insure that each youth is given the opportunity to transition into productive and successful adults. To this end, the YO program places youth in meaningful long-term employment which will give them the experience and work history that will lead to better, higher wage jobs as adults. The YO program provides qualified, caring staff and a YO center that will provide an atmosphere in which youth can learn so that they may stay in school and complete their High School education. The YO program will provide youth with the opportunity to learn the technical skills (through post secondary education) which will provide the knowledge needed for high paying jobs.

### HIGHLIGHTS AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- The YOP in coordination with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council developed and approved a truancy ordinance to address the truancy problem in the schools. The ordinance was incorporated by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe into tribal law. The Ute Mountain Ute Truancy law has significantly reduced absenteeism at the Cortez High School thanks to the efforts of the YO program.
- The YO program has partnered with the School-to-Career Program to provide job readiness and financial management training for students.
- A YO youth is serving on the School Advisory Committee through the RE-1 School District.

### KEY PARTNERS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Cortez High School and San Juan High School (White Mesa, UT) Southwest Open** (alternative school): The YO program has formed a very close working relationships with the high schools and middle schools where most Native American youth on the reservation attend. Through this partnership, YO counselors now have office space in the schools so that they are available onsite to work with In-School Youth. The high school principals and the YO program staff now have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss any issues or problems with Native American Youth in their school system.
- Linkages have been established with the **RE-1 schools, and Ft. Lewis College and Pueblo Community College** which support programs such as the **Upward and Outward Bound programs and Talent Search**.
- Out-of school youth are provided GED classes at both Towaoc (CO) and Blanding (UT) sites. The local school district provides tutoring assistance for students who are unable to attend school full-time.
- **The Tribal Employee Assistance Program** provides periodic staff training.
- A partnership has been established with **Montezuma County Partners Program** in Cortez to provide mentoring.
- **Crow Canyon Archeological** provides atlatl and construction training and elder-assisted instruction in traditional basketmaking.